

The Causes of the Cross (Mark 15:42-47)

Proposition: For every child of God, Joseph of Arimathaea best exemplifies the transforming power of the reality of the Cross. I want you to see several things the cross caused in the life of Joseph of Arimathaea.

The Cross Caused him to:

- I. **Step Out for Christ** (Vs. 42-43)
 - A. He Stepped Out of Favor with the World (Vs. 43a)
 - B. He Stepped Out on Faith in God (Vs. 43b)
 - C. He Stepped Out in Fidelity to Christ (Vs. 43c)
- II. **Speak Up for Christ** (Vs. 43c-45)
 - A. He Spoke Up despite the Dangers (Vs. 43c)
 - B. He Spoke Up despite the Despair (Vs. 44-45)
- III. **Spare Not for Christ** (Vs. 46)
 - A. He Spared Not in the Cost (Vs. 46a,c)
 - B. He Spared Not in the Care (Vs. 46b)
 - c. He Spared Not in the Conserving (Vs. 46d)
- IV. **Stand Down for Christ** (Vs. 47)
 - A. He Stood Down before his Status (Vs. 43a, 47)
 - B. He Stood Down before the Sepulcher (Vs. 47)

The Causes of The Cross (Mk 15:42-47)
The story is told of a heathen ruler who had heard the story of the cross and desired to know its power, was sick unto death. To one of his attendants he said, "Make a cross, and lay it down in front of my door." When this was done, he said, "Take me, now, and lay me on the cross. Extend my hands and feet and let me die." As he lay there dying, he laid hold on the blood of Christ and said, "It lifts me up! It lifts me! It lifts me!" Here in our text we find that the power of the

Cross of Jesus Christ, lifts this religious ruler from being a secret disciple to an out spoken agent for the cause of Christ. Paul said it is the power of the death of Jesus on the Cross that causes us to lay down our lives for

I. Step Out for Christ (42-43) - The Grave of John Knox says "Here lies the man who never feared the face of clay" ^{sudden change of Belief}

A. Step out of favour w/ The World (43a)
Joseph was one of the Sanhedrin. The religious body that had railroaded Jesus in a mockery of justice. Luke 23:51 records a quiet objection to the trial proceedings. But here we see a

disciples step out away from the Sanhedrin...

B. Step out on Faith in God (43b) - He was a man of Faith and trust in God. He waited for Messiah and the Kingdom he would reign over. And now, from outward indications, hope was lost. Yet he stepped out on faith. It is the cross of Calvary that causes us to go the ^{distance}

C. Step out in Fidelity to Christ (43c)

"Craved" it means to beg as in "asking of alms" it means to ask for from a lower standing. Though his hopes of a Kingdom w/ Jesus a Messiah were dashed he begged for Jesus' body. Crucifixion a victim left to be carried off by dogs. Joseph

II. Speak up for Christ (43c-45)

We have no words from Joseph of Arimathea at the trial of Jesus. But here we see his ^{open} mouth

A. Speak up despite the Danger (43c)

In the word craved we have some sort of speech, some sort of plea some sort of utterance. May I remind you that Pilate had the power of life and death at his command. This was the duty of the disciples but where are they? Forsook him. But before Pilate we see a man that has encountered the Cross! A man transformed by the death of Jesus

B. Speak up despite the Dispair (44)

- 1) ...lives for Him. Galatians 2:20 I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me. It is my desire that as we see the impact of the Cross of Jesus on Joseph of Arimathea, that we too would see Calvary afresh and be renewed and revived by it. You see for every child of God, Joseph of Arimathea best exemplifies the transforming power of the reality of the Cross. I want you to see several things the cross caused in the life of Joseph of Arimathea.
- 2) ...Sanhedrin. John 19 tells us that he was a secret follower of Jesus for fear of the Jews. But the bold steps that took him into Pilate's presence marked a path away from the fear of what the world thinks. All this after seeing the cross! It's 'bout time we took a path decidedly away from the world instead of along side of it!
- 3) ... Joseph of Arimathea out of sheer love and admiration for the Lord pleaded for His remains. How long has it been since you have done or said anything purely for the Love you have for the Lord Jesus.

1) ...that can be got, not with that which can be got at the best hand." Many of us are left over Christian's. We give Him the left over of our time, our talents, our treasures. But for the one that has seen the Cross afresh: They are willing to give their best to the One who gave His all!

2) ...gently laying it in a tomb. Oh the care that he took when it came to the crucified one. What of us? What care do we take when we come upon the house of God to worship? What heart preparation do we seek when we come before him in prayer. John 14:21 He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him. Keepth! Guards!

Pilate was surprised at the death of Jesus so soon? Usually takes days. He was informed of the overseeing Centurion that he was in fact dead. Joseph of Aram was pleading for not the life of Christ but a lifeless Christ. Again hopes were crushed he was given a "body" a corpse! When they seem to be at their most hopeless, plead the case for Christ before a last world. ^{Resurrection} Sunday is over

III Spared Not for Christ (46) -

Matthew 27: inform us that Joseph was a man of wealth or substance. But in vs 46 ^{we see an example of}

A. He Spared Not in the Cost (46a,c) -

"fine linen" this phrase means linen that had never been used. Hours before Passover at sunset. Time is of essence. Used linen would have been a satisfactory substitute. But no He Spared not and gave his best. When we are to serve Jesus with the best that can be got

B. He Spared Not in the Care (46b) -

Here this most honorable of Hebrew rulers, no doubt dressed in finest befitting his position, standing at the foot of a criminal's cross, handling a mangled and mangled body. Tenderly wrapping it, intermingling spices. And gently laying it

C. He Spared Not in the Concocting (46d)

The tomb was his own. Most likely purchased for his own death.

A place of contemplation. A very personal place. There Christ was laid and sealed in. This prevented things from the outside world from destroying what was precious. Have you

IV. Stand Down For Christ (47)

In an instant this prideful man (son of Jesus) was humbled to stand down before

A. He Stood Down before His Status ^{43a}

Joseph of Arimathea was an honorable man, a man at which all looked up to. And for all of his life he clung tightly to that status. But somewhere on a hillside called Calvary all this melted away. I'm sure he could heartily agree w/ the words of the ³ apostle Paul in Philip ⁴⁷

B. He Stood Down before the Sepulchre ⁴⁷

Vs 47 We find Joseph standing w/ these women disciples of Jesus. It seems as though these women are the witnesses of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Witnessed his death, his burial, his resurrection.

What a diverse company. A Jewish aristocrat and learned woman from Galilee all standing ²⁴ even ground at the Sepulchre.

V. Close - Barclay Joseph of Arimathea

"was another of those people for whom the Cross did what not even the life of Jesus could do. When he had seen Jesus

1) ...have you gone sparingly when it comes to the conserving and preserving the presence of Jesus in your life. Do you hazzardly leave the door of your heart open for lusts and and hatred and come in an begin to rip and tear at your walk with the Lord? Take steps to preserve your relationship with the Lord.

2) ...down before the crucified Christ.

3) Philippians 3:7-10 But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death;

4) ...at the Sepulcher. The ground is level at the food of the cross.

5) ...seen Jesus, he had felt His attraction but had gone no further. But when he saw Him die, his heart was broken in love....it is an amazing thing how soon Jesus words came true: John 12:32 And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.